

PELPOP NEWS

WINTER EDITION 1968 Number 16



Produced by PELPOP

Pelham
PUPPETS

Marlborough, Wiltshire

The Kirby Marionettes



The Kirby Marionettes are a group of puppets that were founded in the spring of 1965 when we had only 3 puppets; the two dogs and the clown which were all made by Pelham. At this time these three marionettes, together with three glove puppets, were operated from behind a large sheet of hardboard.

We gradually expanded until in 1966 when we had 10 marionettes and a small stage. It was at this time when we gave our first public performance at the Kirby Muxloe junior school. The show was originally planned for the upper forms only, but, as it was such a success we were asked to do a show for the infants, all aged about 6 years old. However, it was too late to change the items (each show needs at least three weeks rehearsal), so we performed the same show. Surprisingly it was received very well indeed.

As we became more and more experienced and had more and more complicated and trick puppets, we found that we needed a bigger and more advanced stage. This was started in the spring of 1968 and finished in the summer of that year. This stage cost over £5 to build. It has two sets of side-wings with interchangeable covers, and gold silk-brocade front curtains. These are just two of its many finer details.

Over the years we have collected more and more puppets until the present total stands at 26. However we still have a long way to go to beat the Hogarth Puppets (a group run by Jan Russell and his wife Ann Hogarth), who have over 1,000 figures.

'Letter from Pelpop'

MARLBOROUGH.
DECEMBER, 1968.

Dear Pelpups,

A Happy Christmas to you all. I hope you enjoy yourselves, in spite of the rising prices!

The increase in Purchase Tax raises our prices by about 4d. in the Pound, but in the New Year our basic prices will have to go up a little to keep in line with labour and material increases. Talk about a dog chasing his own tail! Incidentally we still have a number of those half-price puppets, illustrated in Magazine No. 14. Any new member wanting that magazine (or any back number bar about three numbers) can send a Postal Order for 1/-, and this includes the postage (15 cents in America).

There has been a lively response to Daniel Tamulonis' and Cathy Kostrey's letters. A lot of it is due to indignation and they have answered in equally frank and strong worded terms. It only goes to show how difficult it is to please everyone. If you say any puppet is horrid you are bound to get storms of protest from some people because they have developed a character in that puppet, which has made it lovable to them. The moral is that it is what you put into the puppet that matters—that is puppetry—the art of characterisation. However, thank you Daniel and Cathy for speaking up and I am sure I wouldn't have got a quarter of the response if you had said it all in a less volatile manner and take it all in good spirit.

After the New Year anyone visiting the factory will be able to buy characters that are out of production. There is a long list of these and some are very good characters, but they were forced into retirement as we must keep our standard range within reasonable limits, both for the sake of our retailers and our own production. Also you will be able to buy puppet parts, which have been rejected from production, very cheaply. These can only be selected on a personal visit and not supplied through the post.

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

PLEASE SEND MY NEXT MAGAZINE I ENCLOSE P.O. FOR	NAME
2/6 10/6 for two for 5 year Copies Subscription	ADDRESS.....
Delete not applicable	
Date.....	

First Prize in the playwriting competition has been won by Peter Lurie of Transvaal, S. Africa for "David and the Dragon". Second Prize goes to Gail Osborne, Leicester, for "Clocks, Clocks, Clocks". This play is a little short, but the idea is basically good and it could be padded out where desired.

That is two puppets for David and one for Gail, please write and say which ones you want. I regret that "vent" puppets cannot be included in the prizes.

First Prize in the Photographic Competition goes to David Baker, Woking, and Second Prize between C. J. Harrowell and Timothy Hubbard. The first prize is any puppet from the catalogue, second prize one puppet each up to S.S. Type price.

You will find an article in this magazine about "The Kirby Marionettes" together with a photograph. Please send me an account of your own group with a photograph and I hope to feature them in turn. This would help you if you wanted more to join.

Never has puppetry been held in such respect as it is today. This is due to the enthusiastic members of our Club using puppets as they were intended to be used when designed. Puppets are not just toys, although they are sold in toy shops, they are actors longing to get on to a stage to be greeted and applauded by an audience.

Come on members—get together, form a group and see what can be done by pooling your puppets and your talents. You will be surprised! That is if you haven't already done so.

Good Luck,



The picture on the front cover shows our latest animated unit. It is an "Underwater" scene depicting King Neptune and his tuneful Mermaids. It can be seen in the Grotto at Elliston and Cavell's of Oxford, along with some others.

I thought you might like to make the Octopus so I have illustrated it together with other underwater ideas.

For the benefit of new members, the subscription of 2s. 6d. entitles you to a badge and a year's subscription to the magazine — i.e., two magazines, one on joining, that is the current copy, and the next issue. They come out July/August and December. If you do not renew you are still a member but you will not receive a magazine.

If you join for five years you will receive ten copies in all.

If on receiving this magazine it is your second copy and you want to continue receiving magazines please renew your subscription on this form as soon as possible.

Subscription for U.S.A. and Canada to cover extra postage:—

1 year 50 cents

5 years \$2

please pay by International Money
Order or Cash if more convenient.

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Number 16



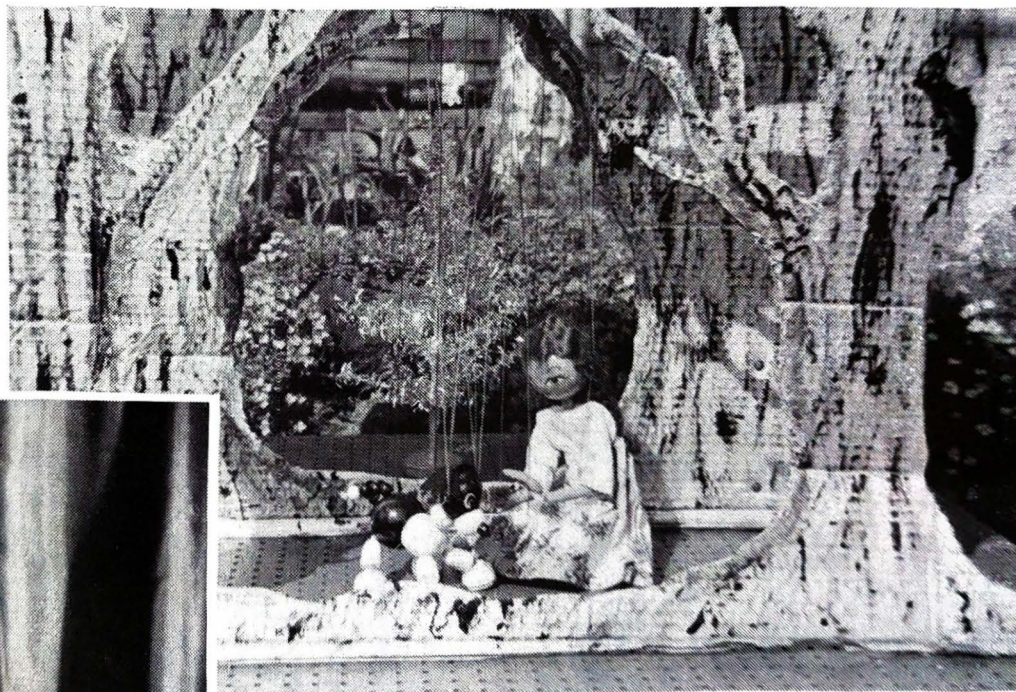
1st Prize (above)

David Baker

2nd Prizes

C. J. Harrowell (right)

& Timothy Hubbard (below)



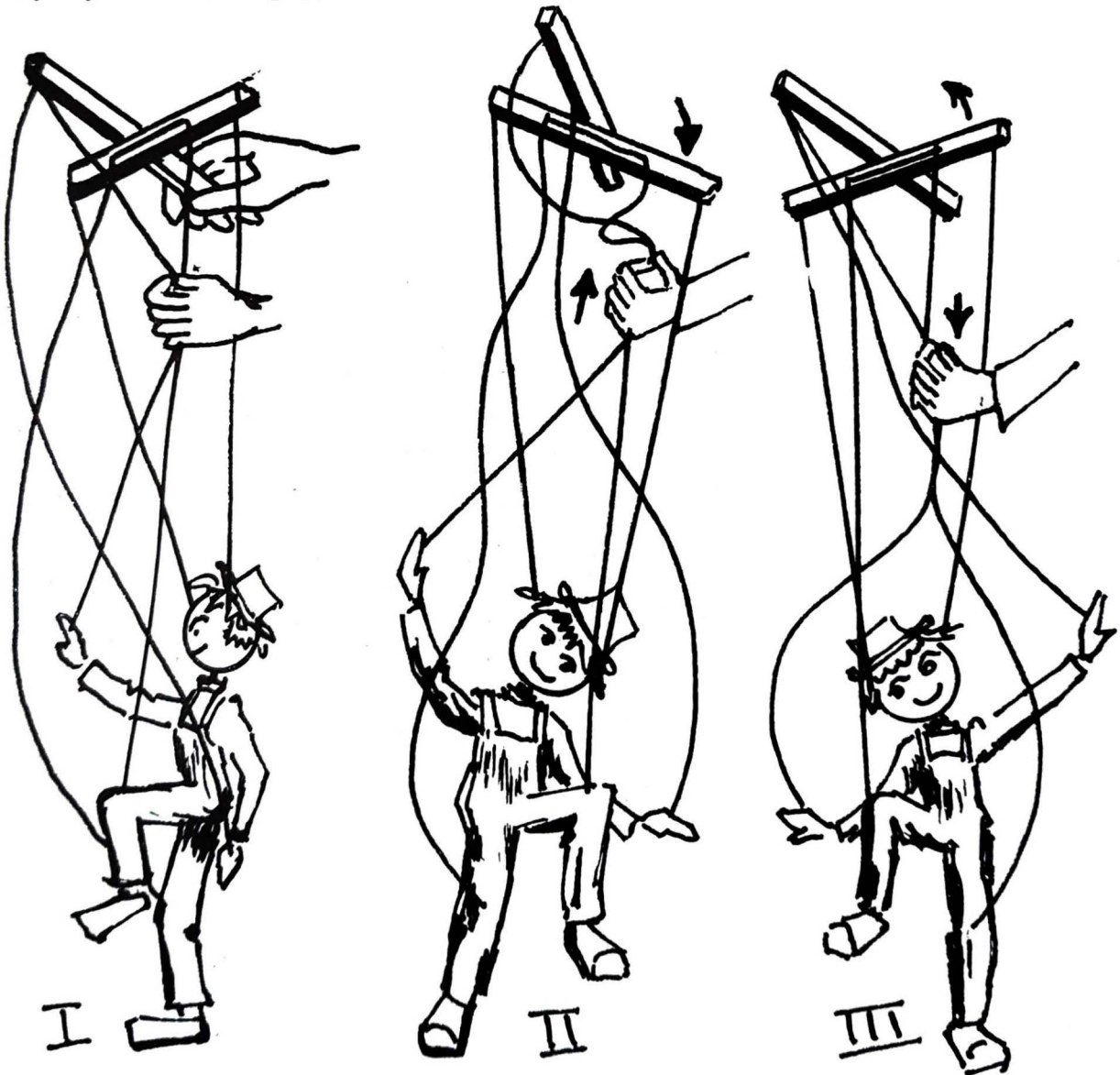
Results of Photographic Competition

Leg Movement

One of the first movements a beginner learns is how to make his puppet walk. This is very easy, but there is a big difference between walking well and walking badly. It is the walking well I want to talk about here.

It would be a good idea to take this exercise in three stages. First the leg movement alone—see Fig. 1—take the left leg string (blue), that is if you are right-handed and are holding the control in the right hand. Incidentally, take this string from the front so that you can draw it forward as well as up and down. Word of warning here though—if you pull the leg string too far forward you will shorten both strings and make the puppet walk as if he is sitting down. Now, you are holding the string at a position about 6" below the control, lift up to raise left leg, pull down to raise right leg. Usually a beginner does not pull down enough and the right leg hardly leaves the ground. Now try again, pull well up and then well down so that the right leg comes up with knee level with thigh. Move control forward at the same time so that he is now walking instead of marking time. This is where it is important to keep the control at the right height, if too high he is kicking his feet in the air; if too low he is walking along as if he is sitting down.

Now you have got the movement make him look a little more joyful by giving him a spring in his walk. Just a little bounce of the control each time he takes a step forward so that he slightly bends at the knee. It is perhaps easier to practise this bounce while the puppet is dancing, particularly if you dance the puppet to music—a lively jig or pop tune is ideal.

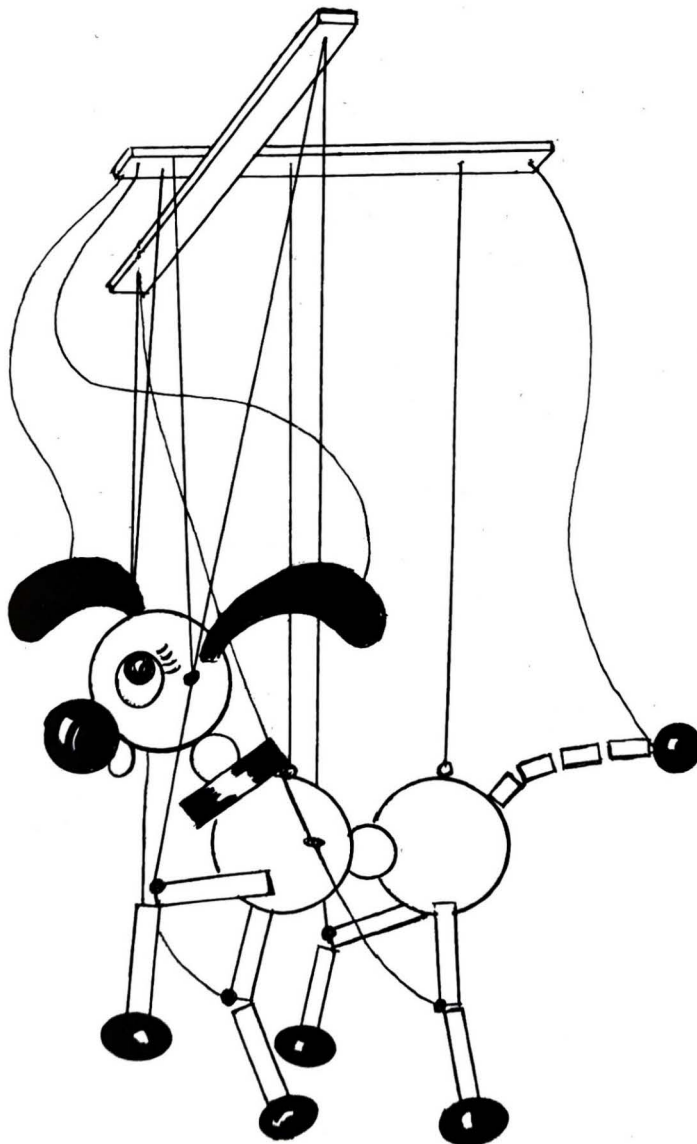


For the second stage, take left leg string and right hand string and carry out the same procedure—up, bounce, down, bounce. He looks much more natural dancing like this.

Stage 3 (Fig. 3)—now tilt the control down towards the leg that is raised. Do this in front of a mirror and see how much better he looks.

“Practise Much for Professional Touch.”

The animal control is different from the Standard Control for the human puppets, both in shape and operation. It is a fixed T-Bar and when rocked it operates the legs; on one side the front left and back right are fixed and on the other the front right and back left. In this way you are able to operate all four legs and all with one hand only. However, this seems simple enough, but it does require quite a bit of practice. First, remember when you rock the control you do it as an aeroplane rocks its wings, the fuselage remains quite steady. That is what you must do to the handle of the control, i.e. do not sway it from side to side. Then you must keep the control just the right height so that all the feet walk on the ground. Tilt front of control up and down for bucking and when the animal is jumping over things. For a realistic trot you will need to bounce the control a little each time you twist. As with the standard puppets, the best surface on which to walk your animal is a rough one, like a carpet or felt.



FUN WITH "VENT" PUPPETS



Supy can dress up quite easily either in front of the audience & do impersonations like Tommy Cooper, or before hand if the change is too elaborate. Here you see him as a magician, a politician (Your guess is as good as mine!) or a merry monk (a bald pate can be bought in most joke shops or departments)



Now I
LOOK AS UGLY
AS BOGGLES

TO PUT ON HAT
WITH ELASTIC STRAP, HOOK
STRAP UNDER NOSE &
PULL HAT TO BACK OF HEAD
THEN SLIP ELASTIC ROUND
CHIN & BEHIND ONE EAR
IF HAT IS TO COME FORWARD

Also you can buy wigs, hats false noses with moustaches, beards, horrible rubber hands etc, etc. though most of these you could make yourself & they would be better for size if you did. Miniature party hats are just right for size.

MORE "VENT" IDEAS

It's that hand that brings the puppet to life. So when he is not scratching his head or wiping his nose with the back of his hand, I mean, handkerchief, let him be doing something positive such as pouring out a cup of tea, brushing his hair, not to forget his suit, telephoning or playing with a puppet or this



Hallo Boggles this is Supy, Come round for a cup of tea this evening I'll be all on my own

IT JUST MAKES HIM REAL!

What a loving little chap



Why do you spit in my eye when I shout?

or this



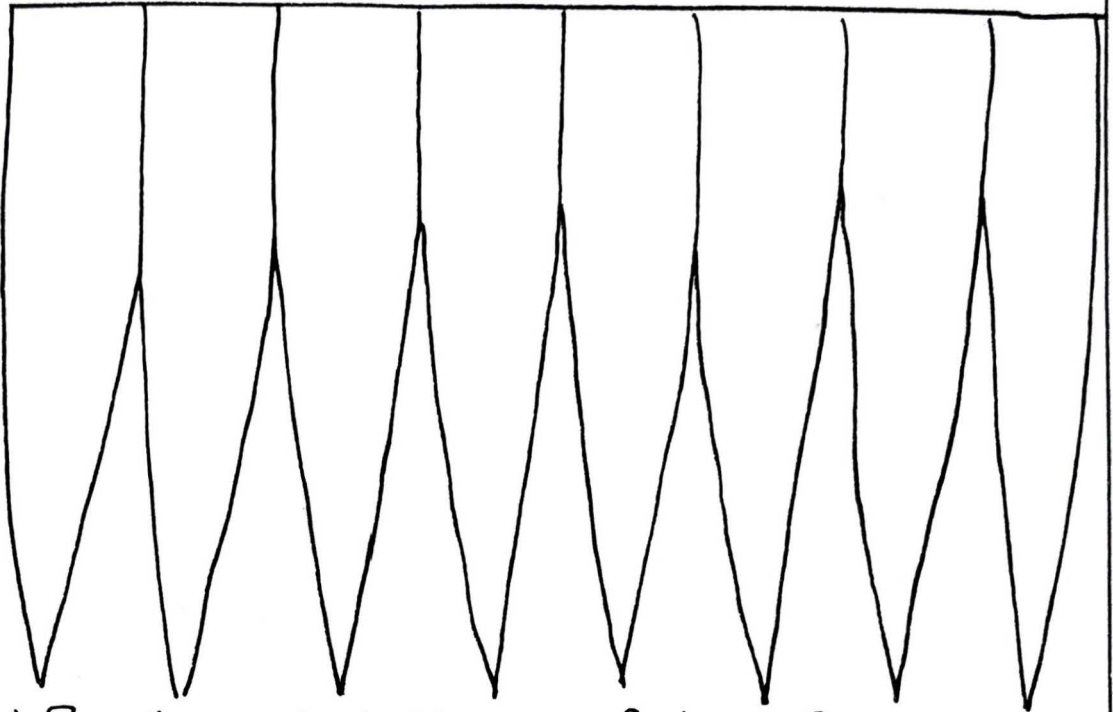
I wonder if I could get a job as a demonstrator.

I think it is easier if you are right handed

to hold control in your left hand, so that your right hand becomes the right hand of the puppet, making it easier to write or do the things which are more naturally done with that hand.

HOW TO MAKE AN OCTOPUS From orange & black felt.

PATTERN FOR OCTOPUS
Cut 8 in black & 8 in orange felt.

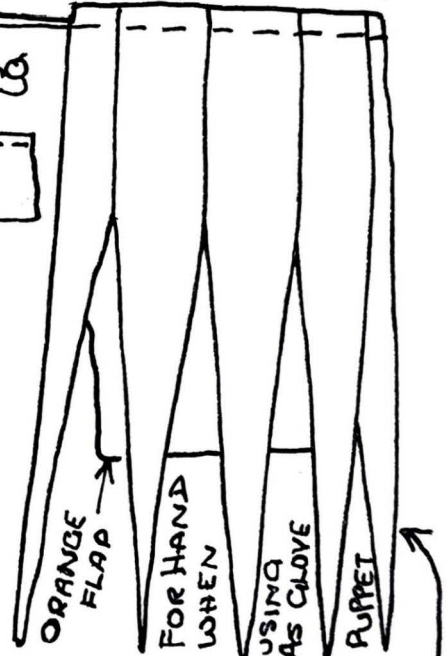
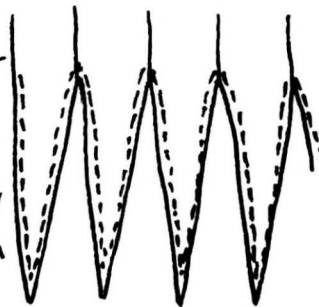
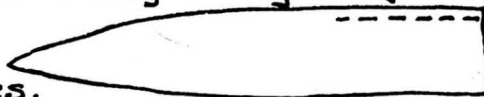


Cut 8 patterns (on left) out of black felt & 8 out of orange felt. Join all black pieces together by machining only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way along →

Ditto with orange pieces.

Open both sets out & press.

Place together with seams innermost, & machine black & orange tentacles together using black cotton on top if black side uppermost.



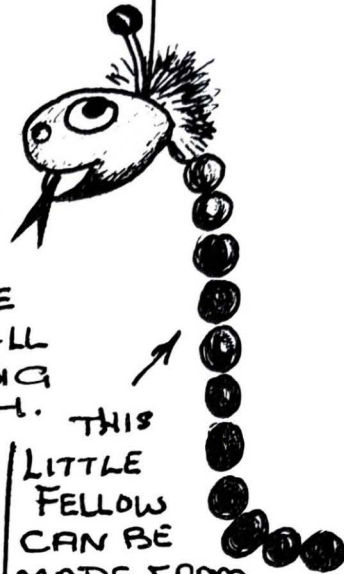
Join as though it was a skirt, having first pulled orange flap down & turned so tentacles are inwards. Turn right way round to look like this. Run strong thread round top so that you can draw it round neck of octopus.

SOME UNDERWATER EXTRAS

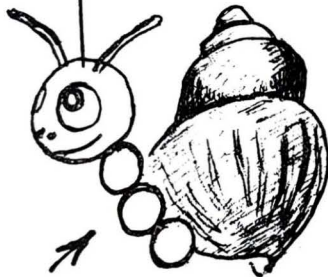


FIND TWO LARGE SCALLOP SHELLS HINGE AT BACK. MISS PEARL CAN BE A PINGPONG BALL IF SHELL'S BIG ENOUGH.

Octopus supported by two head strings.



THIS LITTLE FELLOW CAN BE MADE FROM DRIED PEAS & A NUT FOR A HEAD ALL STRUNG UP ON A THREAD.



COLLECT LARGE SHELLS & ALL SORTS OF THINGS CAN COME OUT OF THEM.

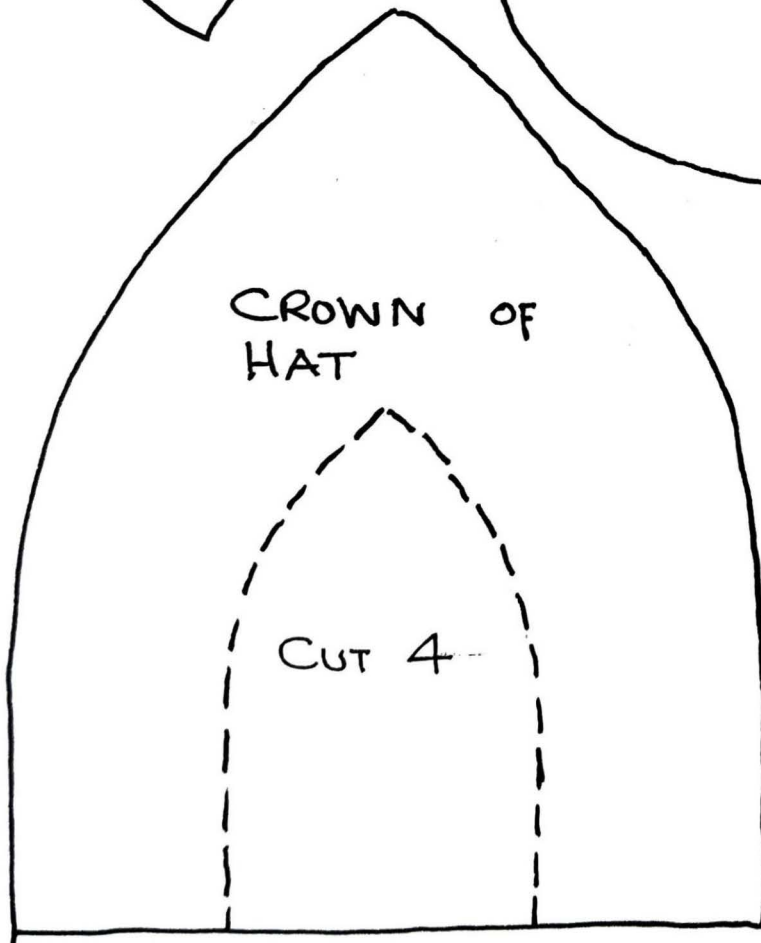
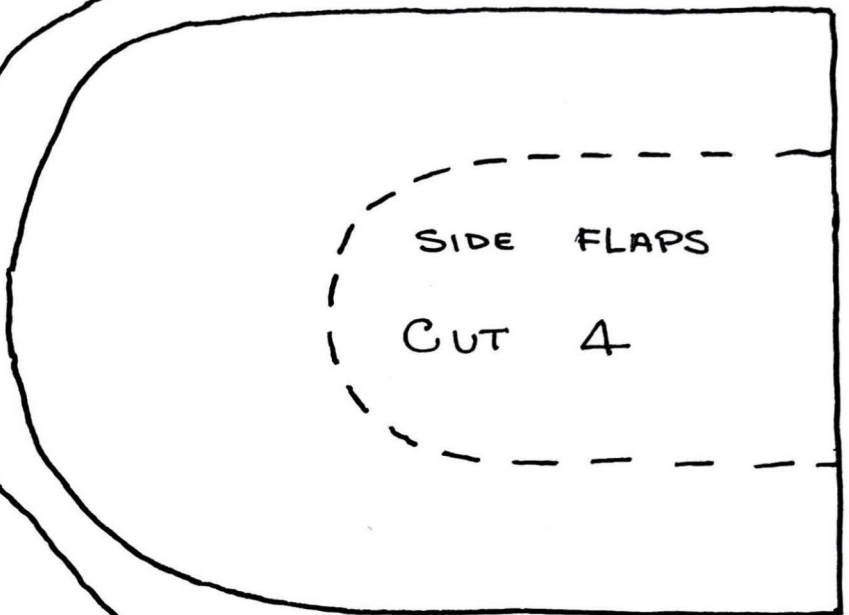
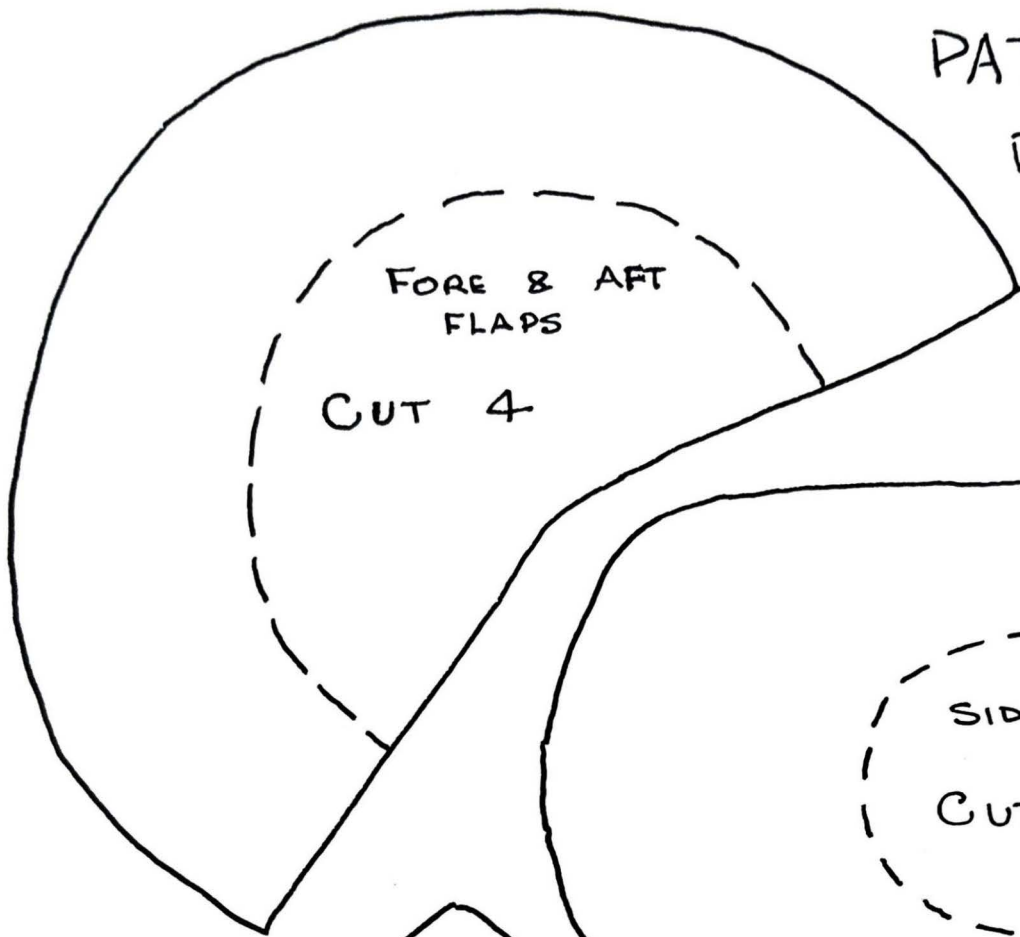
SEA WEED CAN BE CUT OUT OF GREEN PLASTIC BAGS ATTACHED TO SCENERY AND ALLOWED TO WAVE IN THE BREEZE.

STRINGS TO TENTACLES TWO OR MORE ACCORDING TO AMOUNT OF MOVEMENT REQUIRED.

OCTOPUS HAS AROUND OR OVAL HEAD WITH A GLOVE PUPPET TYPE NECK, TO WHICH BODY IS ATTACHED SO IT CAN BE EITHER A GLOVE OR A STRING PUPPET.



PATTERNS FOR
DEER-STALKER
HAT

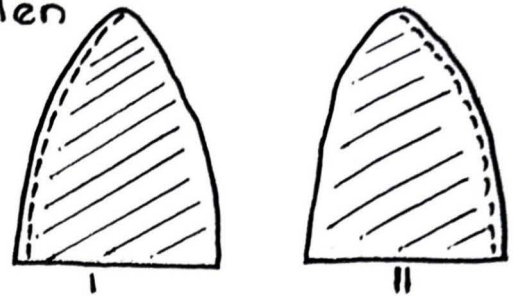


FULL SIZE OF
PATTERN FOR
VENT PUPPET.

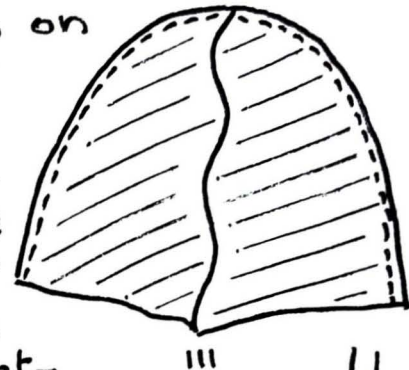
FOR STANDARD
PUPPET REDUCE
TO DOTTED
LINE.

HOW TO MAKE A DEER-STALKER HAT

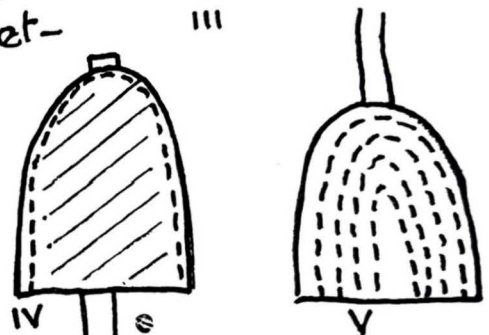
First find some nice thick woollen material, with a large check pattern on it. The shaded areas show the wrong side of the material, & the dotted lines show the stitching required in that stage.



Now cut out patterns as shown on previous page. Take two hat patterns, & machine (or stitch) down one seam (I). Then take other two & machine down opposite seam (II). Open out placing first set upon the second & machine round seam joining the two together (III). Turn & press out seams.



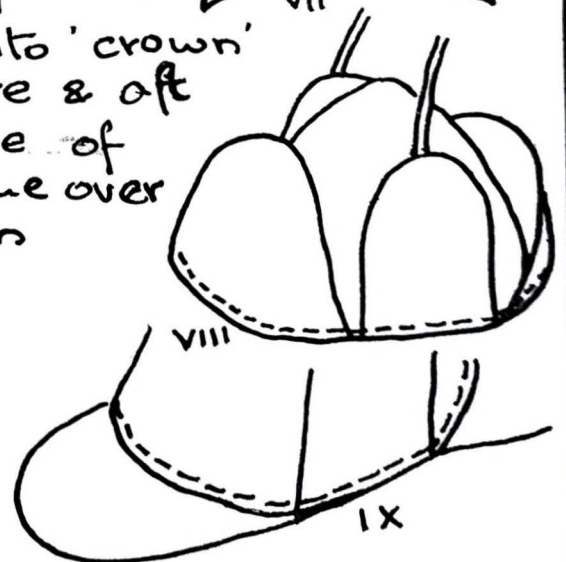
Now take two side flaps, laying some tape between & machine round seam (IV). Do same with other two flaps. Turn both inside out. Run four or five rows of stitching over flaps (V).



Do same with fore & aft patterns, but insert no tape (VI & VII).

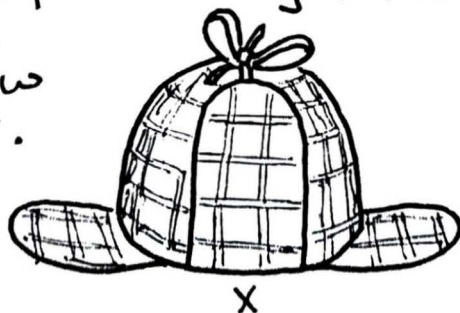


Now machine all four flaps onto 'crown' as shown in fig. VIII. Turn fore & aft flaps down & machine along base of crown catching in hem. Machine over top of side flaps so they remain upwards, (IX).



Tie tape in bow on top of hat.

ELEMENTARY
MY DEAR
WATSON!



A Walk Around Puppet Land

Britain's only puppet factory, started in 1948 by Bob Pelham, against a non-existent market has steadily increased in size and turnover and is now recognised as Marlborough's leading industry.

There is nothing unusual about this factory but visitors who come in bus loads from all parts of the country, find it very interesting and usually show astonishment, after seeing so many departments and processes, that so much goes into making a puppet. The first department into which visitors are shown is the machine room. This is fitting because it is here that the long process starts. This is where you are told about the timber we use. It is Parana Pine—a hard clean wood free of knots and splinters. It has a tendency to warp in long lengths but since we cut it up into short lengths this characteristic does not worry us. We order our timber in about a dozen different sizes ready to cut up into the individual shapes—for instance—top body wood comes in 6ft. lengths of 2" x $\frac{3}{4}$ " and is then cut into 2" pieces; lower body wood $1\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{3}{4}$ " is also cut into 2" pieces. These pieces may require their corners (at the waist) cut off. They then go into a great big tumbler and they "rumble" round and round for half an hour and come out smooth and silky to the touch. In this room you are also told about the round wooden balls which we use for our standard heads. This story goes back to a Mop Fair in Marlborough in 1948 when a Fair man thrust some coconutshy balls into my hands, saying "4 balls for 6d." Instantly I saw that these balls would make perfect heads for our puppets. The Fair man told me of a Turner at Stroud. They now make balls for us of all sizes from 1" to 5" and a hundred other shapes as well, and their business has grown with ours.

In the Machine Room there are also drills of all sorts for drilling the bodies and machines for slotting and sanding the legs. You then pass to the next department which is called the Assembly Room. There metal tags are tapped into the slotted ends of the limbs and they are drilled on jigs for the securing pins. As the name of the room implies the whole body is assembled here—so many with red boots, so many with green, blue, black or yellow; some with green limbs, some with black or brown limbs, there must be fifty different varieties. Controls are also made in this department. Though basically the two main differences in controls are standard folding and animal T-Bar, there are still dozens of varieties of each, not forgetting the disintegrating skeleton control which is totally different from any other.

You can then go left down six huts in line—two of them are timber stores (one of them the "ball room") and the rest are for the construction of animated units and mechanics generally; or you can go right to continue on round the factory, but we will go straight on—out over the bridge spanning the river Kennet and around the gasworks to the Moulding Department. There are two different types of mouldings—the solid, such as hands, skeleton parts, Muffin legs etc., and hollow, such as all the heads and bodies and some feet. The first is a mineral powder mixed with glue and water. The other is pumice powder (commonly known as volcanic lava finely ground) also mixed with glue and water. In both cases the moulds have to be laid on ice cubes to get them extremely cold, the mixes are heated up so that the contrast of temperatures helps to solidify the mixture. In the case of the solid parts the mould when filled is placed under a hydraulic press and the effect is the same as a waffle machine. The waste bits are put back in the melting pot. In the case of the hollow heads, the moulds after being filled are immediately emptied and put on to the ice, where there are about forty moulds, so that they have about five minutes on the ice before being picked out and opened. Out comes a jellified head that has to be carefully laid in cradled trays and when the tray is full it is put into the wind tunnel to dry. The following day they are taken out and are hung on racks in the ceiling. By the evening they are sorted into boxes and sent through to the Scraping Room for cleaning. The seam has to be removed and any air bubble marks filled with stopping and screweyes fixed into the heads and bodies.

Now these parts and those from the Assembly Room go through to the Dipping Room to receive an undercoat and top coat of paint. They are plunged straight into the paint pot and hung on wires on frames leaning out from the wall, one above the other. The paint drips on to trays, which is poured back into the pot. The important drip is the last one, this has to be removed

with a brush—not too soon or another will form, and not too late or it will have become too hard to be removed without making a mark. In the next room all the parts too small for individual dipping are painted by tumbling. This is a very tricky process—you put all the parts into a barrel with just the right amount of paint (that's the tricky part) and screw the lid down and put the barrel on some rollers which revolves the barrel for about half-an-hour. Then they are opened and the contents thrown on to wire mesh trays.

Then on to the Head Painters Room—the girls here are the most highly trained of all. It takes six months to train a girl for this sort of work and they must already have a flair for painting. As we are known for the fact that our puppets are handmade and painted, this section plays an important part in maintaining our reputation. In America our puppets stand out a mile from the rows of plastic and mass-produced toys. Once a sample puppet was shown to an American buyer and when I apologised for an apparent misplaced stroke of a brush he said I would like every one of my puppets to have a misplaced stroke of the brush in order to stress the individuality of each puppet!

Proceed further to a department called the Dougal Room. As the name implies the most popular of all the characters we have ever made has a department all to himself, although of course Florence, Mr. Rusty and Zebedee have also got to be fitted in. These Dougals are made from real sheepskins and come from Sweden where they are tanned to our own special Dougal yellow. The sheep actually come from Iceland where they are bred mainly for the meat, the hair being unsuitable for the wool trade. This is providential for us and it makes the world's best Dougal, acclaimed by the French, who originated the series, "The Magic Roundabout".

Back on our tracks now to the main part of the factory, where you find the dressing and finishing of the puppets. Now the puppets are taking on their individual characters. MacBoozles will lie headless in piles clutching their bottles, legs gaily painted, while heads are being covered with whiskers and hair and finally his tam-'o-shanter—then head to body and off to the stringing room. To get the process in order we should go round the corner to the cutting out department. Rolls of materials of every colour and pattern line the room and in the middle is an enormous hydraulic press. Materials are folded and placed in the press with the selected cutter placed neatly in the corner, the patterns are stamped out 32 at a time. On a rack at the end hang about 150 different cutters, always new ones are being added. Then over to the sewing machines where these patterns are machined together—turned and pressed ready for the dressing department. We also have about one hundred people doing homework for us in and around Marlborough.

Animals are also assembled in this department. There is no department that have to handle a bigger variety of bits and pieces. Every animal has different paint treatment and it is not surprising we are more behind on animals than anything else.

Finally, the puppets now stacked high on trays go through to the Stringing Room. Each puppet has to be strung with care and precision and the packing girls have to be very careful how they put the puppets in the boxes which have a reversible sleeve so the box may be turned into a visual pack for displaying in the shops.

At the moment our export figure is higher than the home market, but as from now on it is nearly all home market, the latter will go into the lead and finish the year only just ahead of exports. America is by far our largest export market. (This article was written in the summer.)

The Play-writing Competition is always open. Plays received will be filed and judged just before making up the next magazine. Please remember these plays must be original. Try and get as much action into them as possible. That is what makes a good puppet play. Clear writing and layout will be considered in judging the winner. Please be sure to put your name and address at the top of your play. Two puppets are awarded for first prize and one puppet for second prize. Prize winners must write immediately to say what puppets they would like.

Replies to American Critics

JOHN STEWART, MARYFIELD HOUSE, HIGH ST., TAPLOW, BUCKS.—I would like to apologize for my fellow Americans because of the criticism that they made in your latest Summer magazine. The two articles shocked me on such things as boxes and puppets. I have enjoyed your puppets very much and as for your magazine it is well written and full of facts. Your work has given me much pleasure.

MARTIN ISLES, THIMBLETOWN PUPPETS, 12 HAYNES CLOSE, LANGLEY, SLOUGH, BUCKS.—I was rather angered by the two critics' letters printed in the issue, which in my opinion took a rather selfish view-point. Many of the characters they liked, I—and presumably I am not the only one—disliked. I imagine the pop group is highly successful, and could be used by many puppeteers between or during acts in their productions. To say that they are horrid is short sighted—particularly when compared with some of the live pop groups. (No names!)

I was not really surprised to hear that the animal characters did not sell as well as might be expected, though they were very good. But club members with a troupe of "human" characters would find it difficult to fit in an elephant in a dressing gown! They would of course be of immense value to those starting a new troupe who wanted something different, and some animals might be suitable for "human" plays, such as the dragons or other villainous characters. The caterpillar could be used, the Wolf with Red Riding Hood and the Three Bears with Goldilocks. Alternatively some might be useful as comperes.

I also fail to see why Daniel Tamulonis was complaining about your box design—you now have quite a variety of sizes and designs, all of which look attractive. Personally, I am not particularly fond of the ones with the cellophane windows—though they show the puppet to its best advantage, they are not very practical for regular use, since the lids are prone to damage.

Catherine Kostrey amazed me by telling you to "get with it" by bringing back OLD characters! Surely, Bomb, Twizzle, the Supercar team, Torchy, the Walt Disney characters and perhaps even Noddy and Big Ears and all those nauseating Huckleberry Hound characters have long passed their hey-day. I can find little fault with the Giant—and if when Catherine Kostrey refers to moulded arms she means the polythene arms and legs, I find them no trouble, and I am particularly pleased with the leg movements of my Wizard. Why criticise the rod puppets?—it may be unfortunate that Miss Kostrey's stage is not suitable for their operation, but, this is no reason to deprive those who have, or can provide, the facility, for their use, being able to purchase them.

I think your comprehensive range of characters is exceptionally good and contains some real gems, that lend themselves to an enormous depth of character, such as the King and Queen, the Old Lady, SL Witch, Wizard, McBoozle, Skeleton, etc. etc. I hope this letter reaches you in time, in case you decide to act on the letters from the two pots from Pottsville, USA!

CHRISTOPHER READING, 25 SUNNYHILL RD., STREATHAM, S.W.16.—I recently received Pelpup News 15 and in it you said to tell you what we think. I think that your string "Magic Roundabout" is very poor all except Dougal who is very nice, except you should string him and give him a head, back and tail string. I agree with Cathy Kostrey in saying that your rod puppets are horrible (in fact awful) but I think your pop singers are very nice (in fact rather amusing). Also I agree with her in that the Prince is soppy, very soppy, and if anyone was putting on "Cinderella" to young children (or anybody) they would expect to see a gay, handsome and debonair looking Prince rather than the fop with that stupid look on his face you have now. I also think your ballet dancer is exceptionally ugly but I like the moulded arms (even if they do look a bit chubby).

JAMES MAYNARD, TEXAS, U.S.A.—I think that the letter of criticism from Cathy Kostrey which you printed in your last magazine was very rude. Though it would be nice if some of the old puppets were brought back into stock, the puppets are marvellous right now. A friend of mine, as I said in another letter I sent you, owns the Pop Singers and I think they are just fine. She said that the SM Boy and Girl looked different from those in her black & white catalogue. Obviously she hasn't seen the new ones in your colour catalogue. I can't understand why she does not like the Cat and Bengo, and the Black Poodle is the cutest puppet I've ever seen. Actually some of her remarks were really insulting. I hope you print this section of my letter in your next news so that other Pelpups will know my frank opinions.

DAVID LEECH, 17 PRIORY ROAD, STONE, STAFFS.—I think Daniel Tamulonis and Cathy Kostrey are "round the bend". Their letters in magazine No. 15 were a load of codswallop, it's just like

writing to the Beatles (kings of all pop groups) and telling them to bring back Tommy Steele, George Formby, Gracie Fields, Tommy Trinder and Vera Lynn, then getting rid of the Rolling Stones, Mary Hopkin, Dusty Springfield, The Beach Boys, so carry on making the puppets that sell. A word from me to Dan and Cath, **YOU GET WITH IT, NOT BOB PELHAM!** Please will you take my advice instead of Daniel Tamulonis and Cathy Kostrey. Start making more spacemen, "way out" puppets with half a dozen arms, monsters from other planets, better looking pop groups, Herman Munster, Dracula, Old Mother Riley, and more television characters of today, like Harold Wilson, President Johnson, General de Gaulle, Queen Elizabeth II, Bob Pelham, Father Christmas, John Lennon, Paul McCartney and the rest of the gang.

TIMOTHY HUBBARD, THE KIRBY MARIONNETTES, 17 KIRBY LANE, KIRBY MUXLOE, LEICESTER.—Now for a few character suggestions: Animals that look real and that are *not dressed up*; Camel, Giraffe, Elephant, Hippo, etc. Please *bring back*: Clever Willie, Lulabelle, Little White Bull, Baby Bimbo, and Sea Horse. Please *dispose of*: SS Gypsy & Tyro Boy, SL Wolf, Frog, Red Riding Hood & Wicked Witch.

ALAN THORPE, 138 DRYANDRA ST., O'CONNOR 2601, CANBERRA, AUST.—Not only do the writers show lack of good taste and tact, but they have nothing whatsoever to contribute. Why don't they like the puppets? The box? (as if that mattered). Mr. Tamulonis also displays a very weak vocabulary. We read nothing but "horrid", "hate", and "horrible" in his letter. Also, I'm sure no one would mind if Miss Kostrey decides to leave the club when you don't carry out her orders! Now I'd like to offer some criticism. I think your ventriloquial puppets are a great idea. We had a similar idea in making a moving mouth rabbit for a compere. Such puppets pop up anywhere and leave the stage free for scene changing. No long pauses, and the audience is kept interested. I think your skeleton is the best puppet you ever made. For a short act or a longer feature, he's always the star. I use luminous paint on mine—the kids love it. We have found that variety shows mimed to records give a very polished effect, especially if they are funny, e.g. "I've lost my Mummy", pop group and skeleton. If you want to make more puppets I suggest those like a skeleton. A beginner can give a single handed show with his first puppet. By all means bring back your snake charmer. With a harem dancer, snake and appropriate music—voila! I hope you print this letter and also any others which show that our two American friends are in the very small minority.

DAVID MOODIE, 43A SHAKESPEARE RD., WORTHING, SUSSEX.—About the magazine . . . (a) Those new puppets advertised are really wizard! Especially Cornelia! (b) I was pleased to see my letter in it—thank you. (c) I was rather shocked at the rudeness (and I'm afraid I must definitely call it rudeness) of our American members, criticizing your puppets. It shows a lack of moderate intelligence and use of imagination on their part, i.e. as to what can be done with the puppets mentioned (the scope for them, that is), as "no good". I have just bought SL Red Riding Hood and I think her a wonderful puppet—such a pretty face—and when I removed the hood *completely* I found it revealed two braids of shiny black hair, and a Kansas Farmlike cotton check dress. What a marvellous Dorothy (Judy Garland style) in a puppet production of "The Wizard of Oz" she would make! Just think! I agree about the "Alice in Wonderland" puppets (I would like to perform that soon) but the way they criticized the other puppets as if you catered for *them and them alone*! Don't they know it's impossible to please everyone?

ROB BURN, 36 JUBILEE CRESCENT, ROTHBURY, MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND.—I do not like the attitudes of the two American Pelpups. I think the SL Red Riding Hood is much better than the SS one. Also there is nothing wrong with the Pop Group, Giant, etc. I would, however, agree to the suggestion of the return of *all* the old puppets which are out of production. SUGGESTION: Why not make old out of production puppets to order for Pelpups who really want them? What do you think? I also agree that the Prince is "rather soppy". I think he should be made more masculine (do away with the silk suit and white wig). I think the puppets, which are on the front of the magazine, are very good (you don't really need a stage for them do you?) so I may think of buying them! (They are a type of "Humanette" aren't they?)

"Well now you have all had your say and very useful your letters are, too, but they do sound a little harsh so I want to say if it takes a little rudeness to get results, let us have rudeness—thank you Cathy and Daniel."

David and the Dragon

By PETER LURIE, P.O. Box 177, Johannesburg, Transvaal, S. Africa.

ACT I SCENE 1

In the Park. DAVID stands under the only tree with leaves still on it. Enter ALAN.

ALAN: Come on, David, time to go home, every one has gone.

DAVID: No, I always love standing under this tree, even in winter. I don't know why, I just feel happy here.

ALAN: Well, I'm going home, it's no fun being in the park when all the trees are bare.

DAVID: Do you realise that this tree is the only one which has still got leaves? I think it's kind of magic.

ALAN: Magic or not, I'm going home. Good-bye.

DAVID: Good-bye, Alan.

(DAVID remains, walks up and down, looks up at the tree, sees something moving. A head comes round, DAVID steps back in fright, then comes back again).

DAVID *(aside)*: This tree seems to be alive. *(To the tree)*. Are you a moving tree?

DRAGON: No, of course not.

DAVID: Are you a snake?

DRAGON: No, I'm too big for that.

DAVID: Well, what are you?

DRAGON: I'm a baby dragon, and I stayed behind when my parents went to the caves for the winter. But I'm sorry now because I feel so lonely. Nobody comes to stand in front of my tree any more, and I don't see anyone any more.

DAVID: Why don't you come home with me, Dragon?

DRAGON: How can I come? Won't your mother be cross? And anyway, I don't know whether I want to come. I've never been in a house before.

DAVID: I'm sure my mother won't mind if I tell her that you are lonely and lost. I've always wanted a pet.

DRAGON: All right, I'll come, you lead the way.

CURTAIN

ACT I SCENE 2

IN THE NURSERY

DAVID: Lucky no one saw us crossing the fields to come home. You just curl up in that corner and go to sleep, Dragon.

DRAGON: Thank you David, you are very kind. Are you sure I'll be allowed to stay?

DAVID: Yes, I'm sure it will be all right. I'll arrange everything.

(DRAGON goes to sleep). Enter MOTHER.

MOTHER: David, are you in your room?

DAVID: Yes, Mother.

MOTHER: Why did you come home so late? And never said hello when you got in?

DAVID: Sh-sh mother. Don't talk so loudly. Mother can I have a pet?

MOTHER: Yes you may, David. As long as you look after it and it is no extra work for me.

DAVID: Oh I will, mother and it won't bother you at all.

MOTHER: Have you saved up for one?

DAVID: No, mother I found one. It just followed me home.

MOTHER: Sorry David, then you can't keep it. It is sure to belong to someone, and has just got lost. We'll have to find out in the morning.

DAVID: No, mother, it isn't lost, it asked if it could come home with me. Please let me keep it?

MOTHER: How can a pet ask, or even speak?

DAVID: This one can and he says he loves it here in my nursery.

MOTHER: What, here in the nursery? Where is it? And what is that great untidy lump of something there in the corner?

DAVID: That's my dragon.

MOTHER: Dragon? Did you say dragon? There are no such things. Show me.

DAVID: Here, mother. He's just gone to sleep, he was so lonely and tired and frightened.

MOTHER: Your father will never let you keep a thing like that in this house. What will we feed it on? Where will we keep it?

DAVID: Please mother, at least let him stay for the night.

MOTHER: All right, I'll talk to Daddy when he comes home, but I doubt that he will agree.

(MOTHER goes out. DAVID tiptoes over to DRAGON and shakes him).

DAVID: Dragon, did you hear what my mother said?

DRAGON: Yes, I heard every word, but I pretended to be asleep.

DAVID: What are we going to do?

DRAGON: I will speak to your father myself when he comes home and I will tell him that I'll do *anything* to be allowed to stay here. I promise that I won't be any trouble, maybe I can even help.

DAVID: I do hope that you'll be allowed to stay. I like you very much.

CURTAIN

ACT 2
SCENE I

NURSERY

FATHER: Now, David, what's that I hear? You have found a pet and you want to keep it, is that right?

DAVID: Yes, father, please say yes?

FATHER: It depends on what it is. Is it a dog?

DAVID: No.

FATHER: A cat?

DAVID: No.

FATHER: What then, a bird, a mouse, a hamster?

DAVID: No, father. It's a baby dragon.

FATHER: WHAT? You're joking.

DAVID: No, father. I got it from that tree in the park, the one that is always green even in winter when the other trees are bare. I think that the dragon must have made it like that.

FATHER: Why do you think that?

DAVID: Because every one knows that dragons give out a lot of warmth.

FATHER: Well, you can't keep anything like that in this house. You must tell him to go away.

DAVID: Please father, just let him stay for the night. Please will you talk to him? He can understand everything, and he speaks.

FATHER: Yes, I'll have a word with him. You go down to your mother in the meantime.

(DAVID goes out. FATHER turns to DRAGON).

FATHER: Dragon, where are you?

(DRAGON still unwinds himself).

I

Oh my son

possible.

I can stay on
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DRAGON: Well, sir, every one knows that when dragons get angry, they breathe fire. I can do that without being angry.

FATHER: Then you'll burn the house down. No, you can't stay.

DRAGON: Please, sir, won't you give me a try? I promise I will only make a tiny fire, just please let me stay.

FATHER: Well, all right, you can stay the night.

CURTAIN

ACT II
SCENE II

NURSERY

(The next morning. MOTHER comes to DAVID's room, DRAGON curled up in the corner).

MOTHER: Good morning, David, how did you sleep?

DAVID: Very well, thanks, mother. I was so cosy and warm, I didn't even need my second blanket.

MOTHER: I hope you haven't got a temperature, David. It was freezing cold last night.

DAVID: No mother, I'm fine. It was the dragon who made my room so warm. He was very kind to me because he is so happy to be with us.

MOTHER: What a strange thing. Maybe the dragon will be useful to us after all. Yes, now that you mention it, I can feel how warm it is in here.

DAVID: Oh please mother, tell father. Maybe he'll let Dragon stay a bit longer.

MOTHER: I'll go to him right away. This is most extraordinary.

(MOTHER goes out).

DAVID: Dragon? Did you hear? It looks hopeful. If mother can persuade father that you are a help in the home, why, I'm sure you'll be allowed to stay.

CURTAIN

ACT III
SCENE I

SITTING ROOM, FIREPLACE EMPTY.

FATHER (rubbing his hands): Brrrrr, it's cold to-night. Hello David. I hear your dragon kept you warm last night. Seeing that he is still here, how about asking him to warm up the sitting room a little? We seem to have run out of coal.

DAVID: Yes, sure, father. He'll come down in a minute. (Calls) Dragon, Dragon, come down here please.

FATHER: I'll just go and have a bath before supper. See that it's nice and warm in here when I get back, or the dragon will have to go.

DAVID: Yes, of course, father.

(FATHER goes out, enter DRAGON).

DRAGON: Here I am, David. Did you call me?

DAVID: Father wants you to warm up this room while he's having a bath. Do you think you can do it? We have run out of coal and can't have a fire.

DRAGON: Of course, nothing easier.

CURTAIN
(*Install fire in fireplace.*)

(FATHER returns. Room seems empty, fire burning merrily).

FATHER: My word, that Dragon knows his stuff. He's quite useful around the house. I think I'll let David keep him.

DRAGON (*off-stage, muffled*): Hurray.
(*Enter MOTHER.*)

MOTHER: Oooh, what a lovely fire. Did you order more coal, dear?

FATHER: No, I didn't. This is David's Dragon's work. He is very good at warming things up. I have decided that David can keep him for as long as he likes.

(*All voices, off-stage "hurray, hurray, hurray"*).

CURTAIN
THE END

Clocks, Clocks, Clocks

By GAIL OSBORNE (aged 14), 70 Helena Crescent, Leicester, LE4 2HA.

Characters: OLD MAN, WITCH, MITZI, NARRATORS can be a CLOWN and POLICEMAN.

NARRATOR'S PART

Once upon a time lived an old clockmaker, who loved to hear the sound of a clock, tic, toc, tic, toc. The old man owned a little shop where he would be busy every day, working, and his clocks would be ticking and tocking and making all different sounds. So you can imagine the noise that they would all be making. Well one day this is what happened.

(*A lot of noise is coming from an old looking shop at (R). Enter WITCH. Music-dance of Nubian slaves, intro from Bizet's Carmen.*)

WITCH: Hello, my friends (*talking to the audience*), and how are we today. (*She stops talking suddenly as she hears the noise coming from the shop*). What's going on, can't anyone be quiet these days. (*She stops talking and goes over to the shop, then she knocks on the door*). Knock, knock.

(OLD MAN puts his head out of a window in his shop and says: What do you want, can't you see I'm busy).

(*He goes back to his work, WITCH turns away*).

WITCH: Well! Of all the cheek, talking to me like that. Who does he think he is anyway, him and his clocks?

(*She goes over to his shop again and taps on the door with her brush*).

WITCH: Hey, old man!

(OLD MAN not hearing at first because he's so busy).

OLD MAN: Oh, what do you want now?

WITCH: Will you stop those terrible clocks. I'm fed up with hearing the noise, will you please stop them at once.

OLD MAN: What! Stop my clocks, impossible. I can't, I won't. I will not stop my clocks. For you or anybody!

WITCH: If you don't stop them I'll, I'll . . .

OLD MAN: You'll what!

WITCH: I'll do something horrible to them, like put a wicked wicked spell on them, that only I can take off, ha ha ha.

OLD MAN: You wouldn't! Would you?

WITCH: Oh yes I would.

OLD MAN: You don't frighten me, now! Be off with you.

(*He chases her to the curtains where she disappears into the curtains*).

OLD MAN: That's funny she's disappeared. Oh well, back to my clocks.

END OF SCENE

(*An old grandfather clock stands at right of stage near a table. It is dark*).

WITCH: A-ah! One big clock, ha ha ha, I'll teach him and his clocks a lesson they will never forget for a long time. Now for my spell,

Tic, toc, this big old clock,
Will never strike again,
For tonight as dark has come,
My spell I will cast,
Upon this clock, ha, ha, ha.

(*She stops suddenly as she hears footsteps. She hides behind table*). Enter OLD MAN (L)

OLD MAN: I thought I heard someone talking, that's funny something's wrong, but! a-ah, I know, it's my clock, it's my clock, it's stopped. (*He goes over to it*). That's funny, it's never stopped before. I wonder what can be the matter with it. (*He turns round and sees the WITCH*).

OLD MAN: Oh! So it's you, what have you done to my clock?

WITCH: I tell you this, they'll never work again, ha, ha, ha.

OLD MAN: I'm going to call the policeman if you don't make my clock work.

WITCH: I'm not going to make your clocks work and you will not be able to call for a policeman because they have all gone off duty, ha, ha, ha.

OLD MAN: Policeman, Police, Police.

WITCH: See no one's coming.

POLICEMAN: Now then, who needs a Policeman. I was just going off duty, so you're lucky, now what's the trouble?

OLD MAN: It's this witch, see, my clocks won't go thanks to her! Quick, catch her, she's running off.

(WITCH runs off and OLD MAN and POLICEMAN run after her).

POLICEMAN: It's no good, she'd gone before I had a chance to catch her.

OLD MAN: Oh now what am I going to do?

POLICEMAN: Oh don't worry old man. It's not the end of the world. Good night then.

OLD MAN: Good night.

END OF SCENE

(The Grandfather Clock is removed from the stage, and at the right of the stage are a few trees).

Enter MITZI (L).

MITZI: What a nice day it is today. If only we got more days like today. (As she is walking she stops near the trees. The WITCH is behind the trees, MITZI just stands and listens to what the WITCH says).

WITCH: Ha, ha, ha. I'm the cleverest Witch in the world. Now that I've stopped all the noise from his clocks, perhaps I'll be able to get some peace and quiet around here.

(MITZI gets closer so she can hear better).

Enter OLD MAN (L)

(OLD MAN walks up to MITZI and very loudly says:)

OLD MAN: What are you doing?

MITZI: Shhhh! Be quiet, just listen, but don't make a noise.

(They both stand there listening).

WITCH: He, he, he, his clocks will never go, because I'm the only one who knows the magic spell, and to think all he has to say is nine little words.

Tic, toc, tic, toc,

Big old clock

Strike again

At twelve o'clock.

Ha, ha, ha, it's twelve words really but then I could never count very well. Oh how happy I am.

(She sees MITZI and the OLD MAN).

Oh! what are you doing, go away.

MITZI: We overheard everything you said.

OLD MAN: Yes and now I am going to make my clocks work again.

(MITZI and OLD MAN walk off. WITCH moves into the centre of the stage and says:)

WITCH: It's not very clever after all. It's not fair. I just can't win.

CURTAIN

THE END

New Frolics Puppet Group

We have been asked to write about the New Frolics Puppet Group, both to get new members, and to help other clubs with our ideas.

The Frolics was founded in April 1963 but celebrate this on May 30th, the date of our first puppet show. This was called the "Entertainer" and was a variety show (it is best to start off with a variety show). We earned 3/6 from this for the R.S.P.C.A. (Never again, they did not even send a receipt). Since then we have progressed immensely, mainly due to the coverage of the local press. We now have about fifteen members compared with the original two.

The Club is divided into two parts—contact and full time membership. Members outside the Middlesbrough area are compelled to become contact members. The disadvantages of this are that a contact member cannot vote for a leader or hold any office. Contact members are not normally consulted about shows either. Members inside the Middlesbrough area can become contact members for two month stretches if they wish. Members wishing to leave the club must first go into contact membership for four months.

We have changed the name to the NEW FROLICS because it symbolises that we are having a fresh start. We are starting out on it by not having any official meetings until we get a proper H.Q. (very soon we hope). We also want to start with a new batch of members to join us. Pelpop is backing us on this and we hope a lot of you will apply to join us, whether you are attached to any other club or not, regardless of where you live.

I will be Secretary till the New Year so please apply soon if you want an entry form.

If you will write, care of me, after New Year, I will forward your letter to the new Secretary.

Pelpups Write

GLENN HOLDEN, WALSALL.—I am sorry I have not written for such a long time, but I have been very busy with my shows. Earlier on this year I had an audition for "Opportunity Knocks" which I passed. I believe no one else in your Club has gone for this sort of thing. Although I have passed to be on the programme the letter signed by Ray Mayoh does not guarantee an actual appearance on the show. Nevertheless, I am still hoping they will send for me. My puppets are based on certain pop stars, Esther and Abi Ofarim, Dusty Springfield, Shirley Bassey's "Big Spender", Dionne Warwick and of course Sandie Shaw with "Puppet on a String". I have many of your puppets adding up to over fifty. I also have one of your No. 2 size Giraffe, to which I have added some more strings. This has led me to make five other large puppets which are a clown with movable fingers, Jack Frost, a long funny caterpillar which pops his tongue out, a female teddy bear and a tall "dolly" girl with movable eyes who does the Rumba.

(Congratulations on your performance. I thought it was great!)

CLYDE DERRICK, 144 E. ETIWANCHA, RIALTO, CALIFORNIA.—My cousin and I recently presented an original play "The Cursed Castle" which has been our greatest success so far. We discovered that lots of practice helps to enable the actor to "assume" his part. Monotonous comedy situations and long speeches can prove boring. Also, too many props prevent graceful entrances and exits. Props and scenery should be colourful and not too elaborate. Music is essential. For a haunted house scene, I suggest Gounod's "Funeral March of a Marionette" and Rachmaninoff's "Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, First Movement". I hope our advice is helpful to my fellow Pelpups. After reading your letter from Pelpup News No. 14, we call ourselves "The Hampel Players". For winter, I am preparing a fantasy "The Wishing Well", which I hope to perform at a local hospital.

RUTH WACHSPRESS, 60 HECHALUTZ ST., BEIT HAKEREM, JERUSALEM.—Unfortunately I have found that there is absolutely no puppeteering in Israel. Here and there are a few hand puppets, but no marionettes are sold anywhere. I've heard of one puppeteer (Professional) in Israel but that is all. None of the children I have met do anything. Maybe you could sell Pelham Puppets to Israel. I think it is a shame that children here don't have the experience of puppets.

(Stockist: J. Cohen, 72 Ibn Guirol Ave, Tel. Aviv.)

FELICITY RIVETT.—My play "The Blue Bird" some friends and I acted with Pelham Puppets to a League of Pity party. The League of Pity is the junior branch of the N.S.P.C.C. and we have an annual party in the Church Hall. In one of the copies of Pelpup News you showed how to make a dragon appear to be smoking. This I have used in my play and it fascinated the younger members of the audience. I have found many very useful hints on puppetry and I hope you will continue with these very useful ideas.

PAUL YOUNG, 3702 SUNSET BLVD., HOUSTON, TEXAS.—I have seen Sid and Marty Krofft's two puppet shows at HemisFair (1968 World's Fair in San Antonio, Texas). In one half the show is done in "black" light. I bought a black light lamp and have found it very useful because when a strip of black material is placed as far as five inches away from a black backdrop it is almost impossible to make out.

RICK KANGIESER, 1 SOUTH ST., BAY SHORE, LONG ISLAND, N.Y., U.S.A.—I am extremely interested in joining your club as your wonderful puppets have given me a successful start in the puppetry business. I have secured a summertime job as a travelling puppeteer in an attempt to try to bring back the long lost art. I now have quite a sizeable collection of puppets (a dozen in all) for which I have created new costumes. In time they will have a large enough wardrobe for them to assume any role. (All my puppets have fairly plain faces). I also spend quite a bit of time creating wigs for them, handtied on mesh bases with dynel or human hair, as the best of people's wigs are made.

All this plus a bit of additional make-up greatly enhances their natural beauty. As of now, I have built a large stage on which to have my shows which are a variety-type taken from the "Ed Sullivan Show". So I call it the "Edie Sullivan Show". My "Edie" is the girl puppet which you have created who possesses an extraordinarily large moving mouth. She makes an ideal announcer. Many of the show's acts are comedy, with guns, loud crashes, trap-doors, soap bubbles, etc. Other acts are singing and dancing. For one act, I have re-wigged and re-outfitted Prince Charming and the Tyrolean Girl and transformed them into Sonny and Cher.

PAUL GARNETT, LEIGH-ON-SEA.—My father has just finished making me a theatre, it is 3ft. long and 2ft. high. I have only four puppets, they are Hansel, teacher, horse and the Indian Girl. At Christmas we will be doing a show at our local hospital with my friends. There are seven of us in our puppet group. We hope to be successful as this is the first play we have performed. We have just formed a puppet group at 2nd Hadleigh Cub Pack where we put on a show with some of the Cubs.

JAMES MAYNARD, 2821 WEST BOYCE, FORT WORTH, TEXAS.—Our puppet group is growing. It was started last summer and its members include Carol Smith, Victoria Spitzack and myself. The second show of our season is an enchanting tale written by L. Frank Baum. The story is of course "The Wizard of Oz". The script has been changed and the characters are different, but the plot is much the same. We also started a drama group and this summer we will present three plays "Jack and the Beanstalk", "The Stolen Prince" and "The Red Shoes". I play the roles of the Giant, Villain and Clown in these plays.

MARTIN ISLES, SLOUGH.—I have had a busy Christmas season and was fairly heavily booked right through to July. My Christmas show at St. Francis was very successful and I am now preparing a farewell performance for September 29th. As you may know, I have been using Lady Penelope, Captain Scarlet and your Supercar puppets in my shows, but, by way of a change, I have decided to start an adventure series of my own—the 29th September will be the first major public performance of the series. It is given the futuristic title "Moonstrakors" and is about a deep space exploration team under the control of Princess Marina (who is a cousin of Lady Penelope and whose parents are of course the King and Queen). The puppets used have been converted from Pelham Puppets which I do not use very much, Marina was the Dutch Girl. I have also changed the Cowboy and girl, the Sailor and the Dutch Boy. They all wear smart blue uniforms, edged in gold—the Princess has a tiara (made from an Easter Egg wrapper) and a large wardrobe of clothes for casual wear as well as a uniform. The space fleet numbers twelve vehicles for exploring planet surfaces and Supercar, since the Supercar team are employed as advisers to "Moonstrakors". Then there are the villains and the Lambetta Gang—whose hideaway in the Scottish Highlands was exposed when the "Moonstrakors" opened their main base up there, so they are sworn to revenge.

HELEN AND JULIA FAIRHEAD, 63 BEDFORD DRIVE, SUTTON COLDFIELD, WARWICKSHIRE.—I would like to tell you about our Theatre. We have fifteen puppets between us, all of which are Pelham's. We are having a new stage built, which is going to be 4ft. long and 3ft. deep and fully collapsible, for easy storage. The attic is our puppets "home" really, because all our props and rehearsing is done up there.

We are, at the moment, planning a performance to entertain a group of about 50, half are handicapped and the other half, their Red Cross "friends". The children range from about five to fifteen, can you suggest something that could interest them all (male and female) for some time? We thought that perhaps a mystery and a fairytale would be suitable, but you may have better ideas.

PETER ELLIS, 631 MARTON ROAD, MIDDLESBROUGH.—I have just got hold of a toy projector. They come in a set with some cartoon slides. I use the projector to project "effects" on to the back scene. I am still wanting to form a puppet group and would be pleased to hear from any Pelpups living near me.

JOHN MEKEGNEY, GATESHEAD.—For a start I am in charge of a Puppet Club at my Grammar (now Comprehensive) School. I thought it would be a good idea if I spread that *fantastic* hobby Puppetry as far afield as I possibly could, so I have begun a Puppet Club and appointed someone head of each section. I am head of Musicians, Puppet Manipulation and Playwriters, also overall head of the Club and other jobs. I decide the play we will do, when we do it and how we do it. So you see I have a big responsibility on my hands. The club meets every Tuesday night. My Puppet Group at home is coming on well also, "The String-Alongs". Soon I will be moving across the road to another house. This house is terrific, it means I will be able to give shows in a hut in the back yard. I will convert the hut into a theatre.

The following would like to hear from Pelpups living in their areas, with a view to forming local puppet groups:

MARY DALE, 123 High Road, Wormley, Hertfordshire.

LUCY SMITH, Touchdown, 3 Broomfields, Billingham, Sussex.

JANETTE LAWRENCE, 74 Severn Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

The following list gives names, addresses and details of Pelpups who would like pen friends:

PENNY DUNNING, 7 Fenland Road, Wisbech, Cambs. French boy or girl, speaking and writing English, 11-12 years, hobbies art, writing, reading and history.

CATHERINE LOCKHEAD, 10 Meadowhead Road, Bassett, Southampton. Boy, 14-16 years from any country, able to write English, hobbies reading, swimming and pop music.

HEATHER FAIRHEAD, 63 Bedford Drive, Sutton Coldfield, Warks. Boy or girl from anywhere in the World, aged 12 to 14, hobbies puppetry, books and handicraft.

JEAN MOORE, 34 Bellfield Ave., Holderness Road, Hull. From Sweden, America, France or Japan, speaking and writing English, aged 9-11, hobbies puppetry, speech, swimming.

HEATHER PLUMMER, 249 Herschel Crescent, Littlemore, Oxford. Girl, aged 13-15 living in Scotland, Wales or N. Ireland, hobbies reading, collecting picture postcards and putting the shot. Also a friend from Switzerland, Germany or Canada.

HILARIE LEWIS, 30 The Drive, Shoreham-by-Sea, Sussex. Girl from any part of the world speaking and writing English, aged 11-12, hobbies swimming, tennis, reading, collecting foreign dolls and stamps.

LAURA GABLER, 662 Bent Street, Elgin, Illinois 60120, U.S.A. A girl from Italy, Holland, Japan or London, aged 11-13, reading and writing English, hobbies music, reading and puppetry.

MICHAEL RITTER, 11129-111 Ave, Edmonton, Canada. Boy or girl, from Scotland or Ireland, hobbies reading and writing, aged 10-12.

PETER CAPALDI, 6 St. Cyrus Gardens, Bishopbriggs, Lanarkshire, Scotland. Boy or girl from Australia or America, interested in puppetry, drawing, television and writing.

MARGARET WILLIAMS, 185 Bucknall New Road, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, girl from Scandinavia, Canada or U.S.A., aged 13-14, speaking and writing English, hobbies are reading, writing, collecting picture postcards, china animals and "mascots".

MICK COOK, 1314 VALLECITO PLACE, CARPINTERIA, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A. 93013.—I have not written to you in ages, but after those two letters in the summer magazine, I have to. I find a variety of uses for the puppet boxes. I have used them for beds, counters, glass-front cupboards, "holding rooms" on space ships, and cases in museum sets. If Daniel doesn't like the puppet boxes, why doesn't he throw them away?

As for the puppets, I recently bought the third pop singer at Disneyland, and he is great. However, the SM Boy and Girl didn't look like the photos in the catalogue. The giant is good for fairy stories, except I try to have somebody stick his (or her) hand in the set and that is the "giant". The rods are too expensive over here but they are pretty bad. The SL Red Riding Hood looks like something out of a Boris Karloff movie! As for getting rid of the cat, Bengo, foal and poodle, they are excellent "pet" puppets for the hero or heroine in the play, and they provide good comedy relief in a dramatic play. I can't say much for the moulded arms, but they are better than bare wood arms.

I agree with Cathy on the "bring back" list to the SL Bomb, Mike Mercury, etc., were taken off the market because of bad sales. (Bob has to eat, too. If you had a bad selling product, wouldn't you take it off the market and put in a more popular one?)

Pelpop explained in a back issue that Walt Disney's characters can't be sold in the U.S. any more. (Are you still able to sell Hanna-Barbera's characters?)

Cathy's letter states that you should get rid of the Horse, and bring back the Cowboy and Cowgirl. What are cowboys to ride on—dragons? Mini-Pups should be brought back. I've used the Horse in the Wizard of Oz as a Munckin.

Character idea: another cat, but this time a jet black one. The face has two *large* green eyes. The other features of the face can be done in a black paint slightly darker than the colour of the cat's body, so that they won't distract attention from the eyes.